

Parma, 25 June 2008

**BILATERAL TECHNICAL MEETING BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE EFSA PANEL ON GENETICALLY
MODIFIED ORGANISMS AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATION**

HUNGARIAN SAFEGUARD CLAUSE ON GM MAIZE MON810

EFSA Meeting report of the meeting of 11 June 2008

The below report does reflect EFSA's understanding of the meeting. This report is not, and cannot be regarded as, representing the position, the views or the policy of the European Food Safety Authority or of any national or EU Institution, agency or body.

Participants

Hungarian delegation of 5 experts lead by Katalin Rodics Ministry of Environment and water, Division of biodiversity

EFSA GMO Panel: Salvatore Arpaia, Detlef Bartsch, Niels Hendriksen, Jozsef Kiss, Gijs Kleter, Jeremy Sweet

EFSA GMO Unit: Per Bergman (Chair), Yann Devos, Karine Lheureux, Sylvie Mestdagh,

European Commission: Bernadette Murray, Yannis Karamitsios (DG ENV)

1. Welcome

The Chair of the meeting welcomed the Hungarian delegation, present members of the EFSA GMO Panel, as well as observers from the European Commission.

2. Tour de table

Participants introduced themselves during a tour de table.

3. Historical and legal aspects related to the Hungarian safeguard clause

The European Commission introduced the historical and legal background of the Hungarian safeguard clause, and its request, directed at EFSA, to provide a scientific opinion on the documents submitted by Hungary. According to the mandate of the European Commission, EFSA was requested to provide a scientific opinion on 31 July 2008. In order to reinforce scientific co-operation with national institutions, and in order to ensure a more effective mode of collaboration on scientific issues, EFSA was also invited to contact national experts to clarify all the requested information and potential sources of divergences before adopting its scientific opinion.

The Chair explained that this bilateral meeting is meant to listen to the arguments provided by the Hungarian authorities in support of their safeguard clause and, where appropriate, to clarify outstanding issues related to the supporting documents. The Chair also clarified that some experts of the GMO Panel were attending the meeting and representing a broad range of expertises in terms of food/feed and environmental safety. Following that meeting, a scientific opinion will be delivered by the whole GMO Panel in order to comply with the terms of reference of the European Commission mandate. Therefore, pending the agreement of the entire Panel upon its scientific opinion, the views that will be expressed by the experts during the meeting will be personal views and will not pre-empt the final opinion of the GMO Panel.

4. Technical aspects related to the Hungarian safeguard clause

The Hungarian delegation presented the scientific information used to support its invoked safeguard clause. Within this context, the outcome of research performed with maize MON810 in Hungary was presented orally in the form of three power point presentations. Handouts of the power point presentations were not made available. Some of the presented elements were claimed to be additional and not part of the initial data package submitted to the European Commission in support of the invoked safeguard clause. The presentation and discussion focused on the following issues:

- potential adverse effects of maize MON810 on biological activity in the soil (and more specifically activity of nematodes) through potential accumulation of the Cry1Ab toxin;
- the monitoring of the Cry1Ab toxin in different plant tissues and the soil;
- the decomposition of the Cry1Ab toxin in the soil;
- potential adverse effects of maize MON810 on non-target organisms with specific emphasis on collembolans and protected butterflies through exposure to MON810 plant material and pollen, respectively;
- potential resistance development of target organisms.

5. Closing of the meeting

Following the presentation by Hungarian scientists of additional information that was not part of the initial data package accompanying the official mandate of the European Commission, clarifications on the status of these likely additional elements of information, such as their claimed confidential status and their relation to the formal mandate, were sought from the European Commission.

Consequently the GMO Panel will issue a scientific opinion based on the scientific information received from the European Commission that was submitted by the Hungarian authorities to support their safeguard clause.

EFSA thanked the Hungarian delegation, the EFSA GMO Panel members and the European Commission for attending the meeting.